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SERMON

Preached at the

ASSISES

HELD AT

YORK,

JULY the 23d. 1683.

Not long after the Discovery of the late Horrid Conspiracy against His Majesties Person and Government.

By HENRY CONSTANTINE, M. A.

PROVERBS XXV. 5.

*Take away the wicked from before the King, and his Throne shall be established in Righteousness.*

L O N D O N :

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To the Right Worshipful *A M B R O S E*  
*P U D S A T* Esq; High-Sheriff of the  
County of *Y O R K*.

**A***S this short Sermon owes its Birth unto you, so it seeks its Patronage from you; you commanded it to the Pulpit, and advised it to the Press; so that both the nature of the Subject, and your interest in the Preacher have made it wholly yours; and though its hasty Birth denyed it that just proportion, and those Lineaments which a longer time would have given, yet I hope the Honesty of the design will atone for the defects of the Discourse: I have added little to what I then spoke, and have omitted nothing but a forward Parenthesis which had given some disgust: None can justly Quarrel with the Character which is laid down, but such as are Conscious to themselves how much they deserve it; and no great wonder if these (having over-lived their Duty and Allegiance) like aged Lais strive to break the Glass which shows them their own Deformity; but I shall more easily bear the severest of their Censures, when I have gained your approbation,*

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tion, whose Eminent Zeal, and Faithfulness to His Majesties Service, renders you fit for that great trust which he has now reposed in you ; and shows how much you inherit the Vertue, and untainted Loyalty of your Antient Family, the prosperity and continuance whereof, is desired, and hoped for by all that have the Honour and Happiness of being known unto you ; but by no man with greater Zeal, than by him who is

S I R,

*The most Humble, and most  
Faithful of your Servants.*

HENRY CONSTANTINE

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A SERMON Preached at the Assises held  
at *TORR*, July the 23<sup>d</sup>. 1683. Not  
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PROV. XXV. 5.

*Take away the wicked from before the King, and  
his Throne shall be established in Righteous-  
ness.*

**H** Eaven alone is that happy place  
where we can promise to our selves  
the enjoyment of an undisturbed  
Peace, nor can any other Throne  
than the Throne of God receive so firm an E-  
stablishment, as to secure it from the bold at-  
tempts of malicious and Blood-thirsty men,  
and from those miserable revolutions which  
have buried many flourishing Kingdoms in the  
saddest heaps of their own Ruins: Thunders  
happen only in the lower Regions of the Air,  
whilst

whilst the Orbs above are calm and clear; thus we who are left to people this lower Vale of Tears, lye more open to the strokes of Violence and Sedition, whilst the Blessed Inhabitants of the Mansions above are set out of the reach of those Blows, and are secured from the very fears of such a fatal change. Once indeed, *Lucifer* the Grand-fire of all this Modern brood of Rebels durst design a Change even in Heaven it self; but being thrown Head-long down from thence, he rises full of rage, and finding himself too short handed to reach the Throne of God, he turns his revenge against the Thrones of Princes; he strives to wound the Almighty in Effigie, in the most noble part of his Image, and to strike him through the Sides of those that are his Vicegerents and Representatives here on Earth: To this end he Musters up all his Legionary Forces, he Trains them in his close Cabals, where they sit brooding over that Spawn of Treason which he has infus'd, till they be ready to March upon some fatal Service. He taught *Cain* in the worlds Infancy, not to take it well, that his Brother *Abel* should be the greater Favourite in the Court of Heaven; and when he lodg'd so much

Envy

Envy in his Heart, he found it more easy to put  
 the **Weapon** into his hand ; infomuch, that he  
 who thought it an unreasonable thing, at Gods  
 Demand, to be his Brothers Keeper, was drawn  
 at, the Devils instigation to be his Murtherer.  
 It had fared better with all after Ages, if the  
 crimes of Envy and Ambition had been buried  
 in the Brothers Graves, beyond the possibi-  
 lity of a Resurrection ; but alas, they grew  
 rather to a greater height with the growing  
 world : the corrupted nature of Man become-  
 ing but too fruitful a Seed-plot of those vices,  
 which in time gathered so much strength, that  
 they turn'd Usurpers, snatch'd the Scepters out  
 of the hands of many Princes, hurl'd the  
 World into confusion, filling every Kingdom  
 with Sedition, and every corner with Blood :  
 No Body Politick can be found, which has not  
 sometimes groan'd and bled under the blows  
 which these Crimes have given ; and if it have  
 surviv'd a civil death, yet has it long after felt  
 the smart, and seen the Scars of its former  
 wounds : Nor is there any Crown upon Earth  
 which has not received a deeper Tincture of  
 Red from the Blood of those that contended  
 for it, than its own Gold could ever give. But  
 where

where any Kingdom, for the Excellency of its Constitution, for the Purity of its Religion, and for the Prudence of its Governour, becomes a nearer Type of Heaven, and conduces more to the happiness of Men, there it lies more expos'd to the rage and malice of Hell; and there all the Devils Engines are at work for its destruction. No wonder then, if so many Pioneers of his have been employed to undermine the foundation of our established Government, which justly deserves the highest Character. *Africa* shall no longer boast of her strange productions, since our own Land is every age, nay, every lustre almost, teeming with such Black Monsters of Ingratitude and Rebellion, as are a shame to our Kingdom; a scandal to Religion: and a reproach unto Mankind. It has been put in the Catalogue of our English Blessings, that (by the care of our Princes) we are now free from Wolves, and other Beasts of Prey, which in the former times were so numerous and burthensome; but now, as if their Savageness and Cruelty, had by a strange kind of *μετεμύχωση*, past into some of the Inhabitants themselves, we may complain of it as the Misery and Grievance of our Nation, that we



we are over-stock'd with a company of degenerate Creatures, who lye covered in their Clubs and Conventicles, (those Dens of Treason) and are more inconsistent with the publick Peace and safety, than those wild Beasts ever were; *Cant. 2. 15.* Cunning Foxes, such as would break down the Strongest Fence, and spoil the choicest Fruits of our Vineyard; cruel Wolves, such as would not only tear in pieces some of the meaner Flock, and glut themselves with the Slaughter of the common Herd; but would strike the Shepherd, *πορεύει λαόν*, (for so the Prince is called) and would quench their unnatural and ambitious thirst in streams of Royal Blood. Nor is it easy to determine, whether the villany of so cursed a design, or the mercy of our deliverance be the greater miracle; we may justly raise a Pillar for the monument of our thankfulnets, and may engrave it with *Samuel's* Motto, *1. Sam. 7. 12. Hitherto the Lord hath helped us.* We have long sailed in the Straits, between the *Popish Scylla* and the *Fanatical Charibdis*; and whilst some feared that our care to avoid the one would insensibly cast us upon the other, we have not hitherto split upon either of those Rocks

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which

which threaten our Ruine ; the Sun is still in our Firmament, the light of our Eyes is not darkned ; nor is the breath of our Nostrils expired : nor is the Crown fallen from our Heads. Which wonderful deliverance we owe chiefly to the watchful care of Almighty God, who, when the wretches went big with Treason, made the burthen prove abortive, and crushed those *Cockatrices* Eggs e're they had time to turn Serpents, or to exert their Stings. We owe it also to the Wisdom of our dear and dread Sovereign, the tutelar Angel of the Kingdoms peace ; to the faithfulness of his Councillors, and to the dilligence of his Ministers ; nor should any one of us at such a critical time as this, in our respective places, be wanting to the defence of his Sacred Person, and the security of his Government : we should set banks to that deluge which threatens us with an inundation of Blood. Ministers should Preach Loyalty, People should practice Obedience ; and they to whom the Sword of Justice is committed, should *Take away the Wicked from before the King.*

*Solomon's* Throne was nearer Heaven, than the Thrones of his Neighbouring Princes ; he had

had a clearer eye to find out those who are the bane of Government, and a more impartial hand to punish them; and upon this account was left by *David's* last Will and Testament, the Executor of that Vengeance which was to be inflicted on the remnant of those Rebels, who were concern'd in *Absolom's*, and in *Achitophels* Conspiracy; and having by such an execution, secured the Peace of his own, he prescribes it as the most effectual means for the establishment of all other Kingdoms; and lays it down as the great Maxime of Pollicy and Government in the words of my Text, where he proceeds, *a Remotione Mali*, from the removal of those evils that are so inconsistent with the Kings safety, and the Kingdoms peace; *Ad positionem boni*, to the determining of that Blessing wherein the great happiness of a Society does consist, which is the establishing of the *Kings Throne in Righteousness*; the preserving and delivering down of Monarchy in its *Right-Line* to succeeding Ages, that they also may sit safely, rejoicing under the shadow of that best of Governments which now is, and may it ever be, our Glory and Protection: a fit Pattern for the Repairers of our breach-

es, who should first remove the Rubbish, should first take away the bane and burthen of Government, and then may better lay the Foundation, and raise the Fabrick of our Kingdoms Peace.

I shall observe the same Method, and shall begin, *a remotione mali*, with the removal of that which is so absolutely inconsistent with the just Establishment of the Regal Throne. *Take away the Wicked from before the King.* Where we may find these three things:

1. An act of Justice, *Take away.*
2. The subjects of this act, or the Character of those persons who are to be taken away, they are the *Wicked*.
3. The Reason of this removal; because the suffering of such is not consistent with the safety of his person, nor with the due settlement of his Throne, therefore must they be taken away from before the King; And of these three parts in their order.

1<sup>st</sup>. Then, we have an act of Justice, *Take away.* Had but Mankind retained their primitive innocence, there would have been no need of such a separation; the Earth would have been filled with Righteousness, and the whole



whole World with Truth ; then would Faction, Treason, War, and Murther have been such strangers, that even their hateful names would never have been so much as heard in our Streets; then would there have been such an univiersal conformity of all things and persons, to the great design and end of their Creation, that no crime, nor error would have been committed; therefore no punishment could have been deserved. The wickedness of men first caused the Sword of Justice to be drawn, and has found employment for it ever since; Sin breeds, and feeds those bad humours in the Bowels of a Nation, which must either be removed, or they will quickly tend to its dissolution: This gives many wounds to the Body polittick, and causes it to break out into those Wens and Excrefencies of Government; which must be taken away, least they should grow more spreading and infectious. Sufference is but a bad Chyrurgion; which instead of healing does but widen our Wounds and Breaches. The greatest offenders grow more bold and impudent, when they are buoy'd up with the hopes of a forbearance; and make the most desperate attempts, when they can work under  
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the protection of an indulgence. Lay but the Reins in the Neck of some Head-strong Creatures, and they'll immediatly throw their Burthens, will tread down the Laws of Heaven, and Earth, and will violate all civil and sacred Rights. Let such tares grow still amongst us, and our Land will in a little time be like the Sluggards Field, the Weeds would suck all the fatness, and sweetness to themselves; would over-top and bear down all before them: would make our Kingdom a Map of Misery, and would quickly turn it into an *Aeldama*, a Field of Blood. Execution is the very life of the Law, without which it will prove but an insignificant Scare-crow, not able to keep the dullest sort of Mortals within the compass of their duty; like that dead log which every Frog in the Marsh could despise, and leap on at his pleasure. The discovery of an evil, without the power to remove it, is but an addition to our misery, and makes the blow more deep and dreadful. Nature, therefore for our own preservation, has given us as many hands to take away what's hurtful to us, as it has given eyes to find it out; nor will the greatest offender ever fear the eyes of the Jurors in their enquiries

ries after his crimes, if he never feels the hands of the Judge in the execution of those Laws that are made for his punishment. Pity to some sort of persons, is cruelty to the rest of the Kingdom; and whilst we become their advocates, we become our own Traytors, and lay open our naked Breasts to the stroke of those Weapons, which our forbearance has unhappily put into their hands: so that by this means we may make that sad Exchange which *Abab* was threatned with, 1 *Kings* 20. 42. our Life may go for their Life, and our people for their people. Thus to suffer the known Enemies of our Church and State tamely to compleat their intended villanies, were but to list our selves in the number of those Rebels, and to become guilty of a notorious Misprision of Treason. 'Tis a received Maxime: *Qui non prohibet peccare quum possit jubet*, He that does not stand up in his place, to take away these troublers of our *Israel*, when it is in his power to discover, and prevent their intended Treason, does but joyn forces with them, and becomes one of that infamous number.

Nor should the multitudes of those who are concerned in such a Crime make it more pardonable.

donable. 'Tis true, these render the Execution of Justice an act of greater difficulty; but they make it an act of greater necessity; and furnish all Loyal persons with an opportunity of giving greater Testimonies of their Courage, and Fidelity to the World: Nor should their former favours be any bar to their present removal, Justice knows no Relations; and though the dispensers of it, may, upon any civil account, accompany their Friends, *μὴτε Βασιλῆα*, even unto the Altars, yet in criminal matters they can attend them no further than *μὴτε Βασιλῆος*, to the Judgment Seat, where (like that God whom they represent) they must weigh the merits of the cause without any respect unto the persons, and must overlook the sometimes unseasonable considerations of Nature, and affection, which some of the greatest examples of Justice have so little regarded, that they have been ready to sacrifice what was dearest to them, when such a victim was absolutely necessary to the publick peace and safety; Nor has their eye spared the most intimate of their Friends and Favourites; and indeed the Ear and the Tongue are only in the Commission of *Oyer and Terminer* for the Tryal of such Causes;



causes ; the one to hear the Evidence, the other to pronounce the Sentence ; the Eye is excluded. Hence it is that Justice is painted blind ; and for this reason the *Athenian* Judges are said to have kept their great Courts of Judicature in the night only, that the sight of the person might not influence them in the determination of the cause ; and that an inconvenient pity might not encline them to spare, and suffer those offenders, whom the stronger motives of their own Duty, and the common safety, did engage them to remove, and take away ; but even in the broad day, Treason in a Favourite looks more black and hateful to the World, than it does in one of the meaner croud, who is decoy'd only into the Conspiracy ; nay, sometimes it appears in such dismal and confounding colours to the Traytor himself, that after a serious reflexion upon his own ingratitude, and infidelity, such pangs of despair and guilt do seize upon him, that not waiting for the formalities of the Law, he snatches the Sword into his own hand, and becomes his own Executioner.

Say not, that it ill becomes an Ambassador of the God of Peace to blow the Trumpet of

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War

War, and sound an Alarm to a fresh persecution, (for under that invidious name, some are resolved to expose the execution of our penal Laws) when its nothing more than a just prosecution of such delinquents, whose crimes are inconsistent with the publick peace that I am pleading for: And this the prodigious wickedness of some men renders too sadly reasonable, and necessary. One would think, that those who are conscious of their own guilt, should be ~~divorced~~ condemned in themselves, and calmly submit to their deserved punishment: but if they be truly Innocent, they need never fear the penalty of our severest Laws; nor did I ever hear the boldest enemies of our Government, dare to arraign the publick Justice of our Nation, where the greatest Criminals are allow'd the priviledge of their own witness, and defence: nor is any Sentence given, but upon a full Hearing, and clear Evidence, in the judgment of Twelve unconcerned, and impartial persons at the least, against whom the Prisoner has the liberty of making his own Exceptions, and that sometimes without giving the reasons of such a refusal. God forbid that we should make the Righteous as  
the

~~the~~ wicked; or that we should so far imitate the cruelties of some former times, as to clothe the Innocent in the Skins of Wolves and Bears, to represent them to the World as the strangest Monsters of Fanaticisme and Sedition, and then should bring them forth to be torn in pieces by the sanguinary Teeth of our penal Laws. No, *Ex ungue leonem*, the marks of their villanies do betray their guilt; and we charge none but such men, whose seditious principles, and rebellious practices are so notorious, that the Kings Throne can never firmly ~~be~~ established, unless they be removed and taken away.

2. This brings me to the second part of my Text, to the Subjects of this act, or the Character of those persons against whom the Sword of Justice is to be drawn. Should we take out of the Body of a Kingdom, what every zealous brain-sick person judges inconsistent with its peace and safety; should we change and reform things after the model of some mens extravagant fancies, and wild apprehensions, we should make it strangely monstrous, and misshapen; what they prescribe for our Cure would prove our Disease; and so many remo-

vals would be made, that we should have little left but confusion. Let but some giddy Libertines have the guidance of this Sword; let them but reform and remove at their pleasure, and they would quickly take away our Beauties, as Blemishes; and our Guard, as their Grievance: they would remove the Kings dearest Friends, under the notion of Evil-Counsellors; and the supporters of his Throne, as the infringers of their Priviledge: they would take away our discipline, the Fence and Ornament of our Church, and the Penal Laws, those great securers of the Peace, and unity of the State; nay, some of them would be coming with their repeated crys of *No Bishop, No King*: but we hope they shall never have the power of executing their extravagant Fancies. The Government cannot suffer such bold attempts; and the wise man directs better in the words of my Text, where he charges, that *the wicked should be taken away*. Which may have either,

1. A more proper and restrained, or
2. A more large and unlimited signification.

First then, the word, *wicked* may be taken in a more proper, and restrained sense; and



and in this acception it denotes men of a restless and unquiet Spirit ; of a turbulent and seditious humour ; fretting like the foaming Sea within themselves, and uneasy to the Government ; Men that know not how to bear the least restraint that's laid upon their Pride and Ambition, but resolve to break the most just and easy Yoke, and to purchase their own dear liberty, though sometimes it cannot be done at any lower price, than their own Blood, and the Kingdoms ruine ; Men, that go big with Faction and Discontent ; and like impregnate Waves swell above the highest Banks of Loyalty and Duty, till they break themselves, and bring a deluge of miseries where they come. Numbers of these may be seen, and if the Mercy of God had not prevented the malice of men, would have been deeply felt amongst us. We may well wonder, in so mild a Government, what possibly could displease ; but Heaven it self could not please the Apostate Angels ; surely some of these had been trained up in Treason, and waited only for an opportunity of reducing their seditious principles into practice ; some of them sure had feathered their Nests in the time of our late confusions, and finding their stock of wealth

wealth and credit now in the wane, they knew no better way to buoy up their sinking name and fortunes, than by beating up the old March, that they might start a fresh Plunder. Their common note is, *Nolumus hunc regnare*, for as some of the Rebellious *Israelites* would not have the Lord to be their God, so these English Traytors would not have our most Gracious Sovereign to be their King; for when they found that Heaven was deaf to their repeated Prayers for his removal, they resolved to prove what the keener edge of their Sacrilegious Swords could do, and having kill'd the Heir, would have seized the Inheritance, and would have divided the spoils of Loyalty amongst themselves; But what form or model of Government they would have introduced in its place, we cannot so easily conjecture. Would they have conjured up a Common-Wealth? or have raised the departed Ghost of *Democracy* from the Grave where it has for sometime laid? (and may it ever lye) kept down by the just resentments of Mankind, who have found the little Finger of that kind of Government, or Confusion rather, heavier than the Loyns of Monarchy ever were. However, when they had thus snatch'd

snatch'd the Scepter out of *Moses's* hands, 'twould have been more easy for them to pluck the Mitre from *Aaron's* Head. Church-disorders would have been the inseparable companions of such State-confusions, for State-leveling and Church-leveling are Twins, brats of the same monstrous Birth; and though the former, *Esau* like, be not so smooth and taking, and consequently not so apt to be dandled by the Magistrate, who is justly tender of any thing that touches his prerogative; yet the latter is a more sweet and hopeful Babe, which under the notion of Tendernefs of Conscience, and Christian-Liberty, became the fondling of the former Age, and was so long cherished, till it had like to have proved a *Jacob*, a supplanter indeed, and began to Exchange *Jacob's* milder voice, for *Esau's* bloody, rugged Hands.

Now that such deplored changes were designed by the disturbers of our Peace, will be more easy for us to believe, when we consider, what men of the same leaven had but too lately acted in the time of our uncivil, and unnatural Wars, which I shall not now repeat, since they are stilk so fresh in the bleeding memories of many thousands amongst us; I shall only  
with,

wish, that our Eyes may never be the Witnesses, nor our Land the Scene of such another Tragedy, so long as Sun and Moon endureth. This surely is sufficient to entitle those restless and unquiet Spirits, these common Boutifeus and Incendiaries of our Nation, to the Character of *Wicked*, which is given them in my Text; for though some of them have put on the vizard, and appearance of Zeal, and Holiness, that under so charming a disguise, they might draw in greater numbers of the credulous and unwary multitude; yet this does but raise their wickedness to the greatest height, in that they dare to bring in the adored name of God to the patronage of their greatest Crimes; and by a wretched Imposture make bold to hang out the Flag of Heaven, when they are Marching under the Banners of Hell. Certainly there's no greater contradiction in the whole World, than Religion and Rebellion: We may as soon joyn the two Poles, and unite God and *Belial*, as find a Man who's Saint and Rebel at the same time. I am sure the Doctrine of the Church of *England* does abominate, and Damn all such practises; nor is it possible for any Man, who's true to its received Principles, to turn  
Traytor,



Traytor ; since it gives a greater reverence, and security to the Thrones of Princes than any other Doctrine under Heaven besides : So that we are miserably abused by our Friends of *Rome*, when they would fain lay this Brat of Treason at the door of our Reformation, which we may with greater Justice return back to themselves, who are the more proper Dads, and Patrons of it ; for that the faults and miscarriages of Princes should be censured and punished, either by their high Priests, or by the representatives of the people, is a Doctrine that was never taught or owned by any other, than Jesuits, or Jesuited *Fanaticks* : some of which latter sort are meer Machines acted only at the Will of those wandring Spirits, the disguised Ghosts of our Kingdom, who walk in darkness, and would haunt us to a Civil Death ; they find these zealous Brothers, fit tools to employ in the unhinging of our Government, and in pulling of this stately fabrick in pieces over our secure Heads ; when alas, should they Midwife their Treason into the World without a Miscarriage, themselves would be first buried in the Ruins of it ; yet are they ready to lodge any needless fears in their

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disturbed

disturbed Breasts, and to entertain any factious whispers against their Superiours, with the strongest apprehensions of some approaching danger, which they strive to prevent by turning their Asses Ears into Horns, and goring the sides of Government, which can never be so peaceably established, as when these Horns by the Sword of Justice are pared off, and *taken away*; for men of unquiet and Seditious Spirits, may be justly termed *wicked*. But

Secondly, The word *Wicked*, may be taken in a more large and unlimited sense, and thus it denotes the vicious, and ungodly; such as are strangers to morality, as well as true piety; and these deserve the severest cognizance of our Laws; they are most obnoxious to the Laws of Men, who have lost the respect and obedience which is due to the Laws of God; whom neither the rewards nor terrours of another Life can move nor affright; who will never take any other measures, but such as their own lusts shall give; nor will make any difference between things sacred and profane; who, if they could but avoid the censures of all Courts below, resolve never to be scared from their Crimes with fears at so great a distance,

as those of the dreadful Tribunal above ; and were it but as easy to take away the wickedness of these men, as it is to find it, how happy might we be ? We have out-grown the former times in vice, and can teach new modes of pride, and luxury, to which they were the greatest strangers ; so far have they been overdone in wickedness by their improved posterity, we have changed the Simplicity of the former times into Subtilty and Hypocrisy ; their Loyalty into Faction and Rebellion ; their Chastity into Chambering and Wantonness ; their Charity into Sacrilege and Oppression ; their Church-Building into Church-Robbing : These stain the Glories of our Kingdom, and find employment for the Sword of Justice, which should pursue Sin into its closest retreats, and should force it from the Horns of those Altars whereunto it flies for a refuge. Nor does it always seek to shroud it self in darkness, but goes sometime bare-fac'd without shame, even in the sight of the Sun ; so that many who have so much wickedness as to commit the greatest Crimes, yet have they not so much modesty as to conceal them. These are the proper Subjects of this act ; and the Sword is,

by the Ordinance of God, put into the, *Rom.*  
 13. 4. Rulers hands, chiefly for this end, that  
 he may execute wrath upon such workers of Ini-  
 quity, who are the greatest enemies to the King-  
 doms peace; so that whilst we are sensible of  
 no dangers, but such as come either from the  
*Popish*, or from the *Presbyterian Faction*; and  
 dread no Storm, but what's blown either from  
*Rome*, or from *Geneva*; we may over-look the  
 most dangerous of all Plotters, and may leave  
 the greatest Rebels lodg'd perhaps in our own  
 Breasts, our Sins I mean; which once remov'd,  
 we should quickly gain a Conquest over all the  
 rest of our opposers; the threatening Clouds  
 would easily be overblown, and all our  
 Foes would be made our Foot-stool; but so  
 long as these are spared and suffered, it would  
 argue the greatest vanity and presumption in  
 us, to expect so great a Blessing; for wickedness  
 carries always a Curse in its Womb, of which  
 sooner or later it will be delivered to the for-  
 row of those who carry such an unhappy  
 burthen. And this brings me to

The third and last part, to the reason of this  
 removal; because the suffering of such wick-  
 ed men is not consistent with the safety of the  
 Kings



Kings Person, nor with the due establishment of his Throne: And if you take the word *Wicked* in the former, and more restrained sense, it has been abundantly confirmed by the dear experience of all Ages, that the near approaches of such unquiet, and seditious Spirits, have not only shaken the Thrones, but have proved fatal to the lives of the best of Princes; and the forbearance of such, is but a turning of so many *Tygers* loose amongst us. Suffer such Snakes to be nursed up under the warm wing of Majesty, and all the return which they make for their safety, and protection is, but to turn Parricides, and to sting their common parent, and patron, to whose indulgence they owe their Lives and Fortunes; and from whom they have received that power, which they would by a monstrous and unworthy return, employ to his Ruine: But if you take the word *Wicked* in the largest sense for the vicious, and ungodly, it will appear very reasonable that these should be *taken away*, who are not only Traytors to God, and to themselves, but betray the peace and happiness of the Kingdom, and bring Plagues upon the places where they live; and by their Crimes are undermining the

the very Throne which they pretend to guard. 'Tis true, they may make many foolish boastings of an impregnable Loyalty, and may entertain all Companies with an account of what they have done and suffered in His Majesties Service, when by their Vices and Debaucheries they have contributed more to the removal of his Throne, than their Swords or Councils could ever do to its establishment. We find the people of *Israel* thus threatned, *1 Sam. 12. 27. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed both ye and your King.* 'Tis not said if your King do wickedly ( though Princes are no more exempted from the common Infirmities, than they are from the common Nature of Mankind ) *but if ye do wickedly*, which shows, that the best of Princes may bear the burthen of their Subjects Sins, and may in this sence be as our late Sovereign of Blessed Memory was, the peoples Martyr. Is it ever likely that he should be a good Subject to his Prince, who's a known Rebel against God? or that he should be so much concerned for the Honour and safety of a Crown on Earth, who vouches such a bold contempt of the Majesty of Heaven? His unfaithfulness to himself in  
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the greatest concerns of Eternity, shews how unfit he is to be intrusted with his Princes safety; for when he sets so low a price upon his own Soul, that when he is blinded by his Passion, or bribed by his Lust, he'l betray it to never ending pains and torments, How can we imagine that he should set a greater value upon the life of his Prince ? Surely, when he's blinded by his Ambition, or bribed by his Lust, or bi-gotted by a Party, he'l tamely give up the most sacred trust, and may be quickly tempted to turn Rebel : (the true fear of God lays the strongest engagement upon us to Honour the King ; who will find his Throne to be the best guarded, when the people obey not only for wrath but for Conscience sake) or if he were willing to engage in so just a Quarrel as that of his Princes defence, yet will his assistance prove more inconsiderable, when his Vice has dulled his Head, and weakned his Hand, and has strangely loosed the powers of his dispirited Soul ; when it has let out all that Noble Blood, which should furnish him with a supply of fresh Courage, so that he's miserably disabled either for his own, or for his Princes defence : His guilt makes him unable sometime to en-  
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gage with the terrors of his own Conscience; then the resolution quickly cools in his fainting Heart, and the weapons fall out of his trembling Hand, and he seeks a sanctuary when he should take the Field; nor can they do any great service, when their Oaths are keener, and wound deeper than their Swords; and their Debaucheries do a greater mischief to themselves, than their Blows can ever do to their Enemies; and surely such Deboſhe's, and Carpet Knights, have sometimes been fatal to great Men, and to the best Cause in the World, which has suffered by so weak a defence.

But futher, Sin deprives us of that which is our great, and only Bulwark against the Treasons of Men, and the Rage of Divels, which is, the favour and protection of Almighty God, who will never be the patron of wickedness; this makes him our Enemy, it sends up a bold challenge to Heaven, and bids defiance to all its Thunders; it lays us open to that vengeance from above, from which all the Powers and Policies of the whole World can never secure us: They may tell us of some clymateral years, fatal to natural Bodies, and to Bodies Politick, beyond which, *Bodin* seems



seems to affirm, that the state of a Kingdom cannot stand; but whoever felt a Nations languishing Pulse? or could find out the critical days of a Kingdom? Are its unalterable periods set down by the irreversible Decrees of God in those Sacred and Eternal Dypticks? or doth it grow weak, and old, and shrivelled, and bowed down with years as the Bodies of Men do? No, it may flourish still, and continue as the Days of Heaven, as the Sun and Moon before God, if his Wrath be not provoked by their Impieties: So that it is not any strange Conjunction of the Planets, nor any Malignant Influence of the Stars, which bodes the Death of Princes, and the ruine of States; but the loose Manners, and the ungracious Lives of the people; these are the surest prognosticks of ruine; and if these be but once taken away, all is safe. This the very Heathens did conclude; for when one was demanded, what was the strongest Guard to a Kings Throne? He answered, *The Piety and Innocence of his Subjects: For if they were vicious, an Hundred Brazen Walls would prove too weak for its defence.* Nay, *Matchiavel* himself owns the wickedness of Men, to be the

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ruine of Kingdoms. But we need no such Testimonies, finding this Truth confirmed by the Sacred Book of God, and by the common experience of Mankind. We may Read it in the Ruins of many once flourishing Kingdoms; and may find, that God hath turned many fruitful Land into Barrenness, for the wickedness of those that dwelt therein: So evident is it, that if Atheisme, and Debauchery, Faction and Heresy be so common amongst us, these Sins, like the Traytors in the Trojan Horse, will do us more mischief than Thousands of other enemies in many years could ever do. The reasonableness of this execution does, I hope, now appear unto you, and you see that men of Seditious spirits, and ungodly lives are justly obnoxious to the censures of our Laws; they are to be *taken away*, because the forbearance of such is inconsistent with the due settlement of the Kings Throne, and the Kingdoms Peace; and when this is once done, we may expect the Blessing set down in the latter part of my Text, where we find a confluence of all those Blessings that can make an happy Prince, and a thriving people: Here Mercy and Truth are met together;  
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Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other ; and whatsoever can add to the glory and security of a Nation , we find it here summ'd up in one short period. For there do the people sit under the kindest influences of Heaven ; there do they enjoy the greatest favours upon Earth, where the Kings Throne is established in Righteousness ; a Blessing of such an absolute necessity to the common Peace and safety of Mankind, that the want of this does not only take away the flourishing, but the very being of a Kingdom ; Take but Government once out of the World, and we shall quickly find it run back into a State infinitely more deplored than that of its first confusion ; the whole Earth would be nothing else, but a vast Wilderness ; but an howling desert of Satyrs, and Savages ; but a Type of Hell ; and men would be but a more cunning kind of brutes or fiends rather, devouring, and being devoured one of another ; and Government it self without Monarchy, without the Throne of a King, would be a monstrous, and confused Body with many Heads, whose disorders, would be its death ; it would quickly crumble it self in pieces by its private Factions, and in-

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terests; it would be subdivided into several Parties and Cabals, each whereof would strive to bear down their opposers, and to raise themselves upon the ruins of those whom they either fear or hate; and when they have gain'd a share in the Government, they would sooner be drawn to improve their short liv'd power for their private advantage, and might be tempted to take measures from their own covetousness and ambition, rather than from the Publick Good: So that no other kind of Government can make so reasonable a provision for the Peace and happiness of a people, as Monarchy can do: And Monarchy it self, the Throne of a King, without a due establishment, will prove but a tottering, and uneasy Seat, like old *Ely's* stool, from whence some of the most deserving Princes (worthy of a better fate) have been thrown headlong down the precipice of an untimely death; and even the firmest seeming settlement of a Throne without Righteousness, would be nothing else but a medley of Tyranny and Injustice. Now here all these inconveniences are avoided, and we meet with a concurrence of all the requisites to a Kingdoms Peace and happiness. For here is,

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1<sup>st</sup>. The best Government's the Throne of a King.

2<sup>dly</sup>. Here is the best Guard, the strongest supporter of his Throne, and that is good order, and due establishment.

3<sup>dly</sup>. Here is the best means in the whole world to procure, and continue so desirable a settlement ; and that is Righteousness. I have no time to enlarge upon each of these particulars, I shall wish that these may not only be matters of Speculation and Discourse, but of Experience and Enjoyment. We have at present all these Blessings, which are the Glory of our Land, the grief and envy of our Enemies; we have the best of Governments, under the best of Princes ; the best Laws, and the best Religion under Heaven : May these be continued to us, and to our posterity, till Time it self be outdated, and lost in Eternity ; by that Favour of that God, by whom Kings Reign, and Princes Decree Justice : To whom be all Honour, Praise, and Glory now and ever, *Amen*.

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